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## SUCCESS STORY

# Kabul AgFair Showcases Kandahari Cashmere

**Kandahar's goat herders produce high-quality cashmere in demand around the world.**



Photo: USAID/ASAP

*Veterinarian Janan displays cashmere collected from Kandahar province at the Kabul International Fresh Fruit and Vegetable AgFair.*

*AgFairs have generated millions of dollars in business deals and have raised the profile of Afghanistan's agriculture sector to the global level.*

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Afghanistan's goats produce cashmere, which can be collected and woven into luxury clothing that is sold around the world. At the USAID-supported Kabul International Fresh Fruit and Vegetable AgFair, cashmere experts including Afghan veterinarian Janan showcased high-quality cashmere from Kandahar and highlighted the southern province's vast potential.

"A herder can collect 0.5 kg of cashmere from one goat in Herat, but we are seeing that goats are producing 1 kg in Kandahar and the quality is much better," Janan said at the AgFair, which also introduced participants to improved methods of cashmere harvesting. "There are more than 60,000 goats in just five districts of Kandahar. Kandahar has the potential to generate 10 metric tons of cashmere in [one] year."

Janan has been working with USAID and the Afghanistan Veterinary Association (AVA) in a nationwide effort to increase awareness of the value of cashmere and to train at least 150,000 goat herders on how to harvest this valuable product. He has trained 39 field trainers in the Kandahar districts of Arghistan, Nesh, Khakrez, Maruf, and Shah Wali Kot, and they have gone on to train 3,900 herdsman in the region.

"It's the first time people are collecting cashmere in Kandahar," Janan said. "People are very excited to learn how to make more money from their goats, and it is having a very positive impact on the economy and our future." In a volatile area like Kandahar, economic opportunities and stable incomes will go a long way to help families build better lives and bring peace to the province.

Janan displayed the Kandahari cashmere to the regional buyers who attended the AgFair and sparked the interest of a business representative from Turkmenistan, who said he would consider pursuing cashmere deals in Afghanistan. USAID is working to strengthen the cashmere value chain in Afghanistan by facilitating links between farmers, regional traders and international buyers.

The Kabul International AgFair, the tenth such agricultural fair held to date, drew an estimated 50,000 business people and local residents. The AgFairs are organized by the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries, the Afghanistan Investment Support Agency, and the Export Promotion Agency of Afghanistan, and are supported by USAID.